

ROMANS

*A Daily Devotional
Study Guide*



Monday

Study: Romans 13:8, Matthew 22:34-40, John 13:34-35

Reading: Galatians 5:1-14, Colossians 3:1-17

Memory: Matthew 5:26

Romans 13:8

Why do you think Paul started out this section with “Owe no one anything” (ESV vs 1)?

****Though some people have stated this is a biblical command that forbids loans, that does not appear to be the teaching that Paul was giving. There are many other biblical teachings about borrowing and lending, but that does not fit into the context of this passage. In verse 7, Paul had just used the word “owed” in verse 7 to describe how we need to pay the taxes and respect what is owed as earthly citizens. He then began verse 8 by telling us to “Owe no one anything.” This simply appears to be a transitional phrase as Paul moved from the topic of verses 1-7 to his next subject which was love.*

What is your obligation to others as a believer (vs 8)?

What have you fulfilled when you love others (vs 8b)?

****Throughout time, it has been the tendency of men to make following God a list of rules. As we will study shortly, Jesus reminded his followers this was not the case, and here, Paul does the same. Does God want you to keep His Word? Of course He does, but if all you do is strive to obey a bunch of rules, you will miss the reason the rules were given and therefore miss out on the great love and intimacy God desires you to have with Him and others.*

Matthew 22:34-40

****Towards the end of the ministry of Jesus, the religious leaders (both the Sadducees and the Pharisees) were attempting to discredit Jesus. In verses 23-33, they asked Jesus about the resurrection and marriage, hoping to trip Him up into saying something they could hold against Him. Instead, He*

amazed the crowd with His answer and the result was the opposite of what they wanted.

Why did they ask Jesus the question about the Law (vs 34-35)?

What question did they ask Him (vs 36)?

What did Jesus tell them was the greatest command (vs 37-38)?

What did He say the second greatest command was (vs 39)?

What powerful statement did Jesus make (vs 40)?

****The Jews took the laws that had originally been given in the Old Testament and added their own specifics, creating a list of over 600 laws that needed to be followed. The religious leaders had made following God very complex, while Jesus simplified it. Love of God and love of others was the basis for every law given. By seeking to do those things, all the other biblical laws would be easy to follow because they fall in line with the two main purposes.*

John 13:34-35

****Jesus was preparing the disciples for His death and departure from the earth.*

What “new command” did Jesus give to His disciples (vs 34)?

How had Jesus set the example (vs 34)?

How was this command “new”?

****This was not brand new, but a reminder.*

What would love reveal (vs 35)?

Personal Application

What can I learn about God from this passage?

How can I apply what I have learned to my everyday life?

Tuesday

Study: Romans 13:9-10, I John 2:7-11, James 2:8-13

Reading: I Corinthians 13:1-13, Luke 10:25-37

Memory: Matthew 5:26

Romans 13:9-10

How did Paul say all the commandments can be summed up (vs 9)?

****It is not clear why Paul mentioned these specific commands, though we do know that the first four of the ten commandments dealt with a person's relationship with God and the last six addressed relationships to the people around us.*

How is loving your neighbor the basis for the commandments listed in verse 9?

What does love not do (vs 10)?

What does Paul say about love (vs 10b)?

I John 2:7-11

What does John say about the commandment he was writing to his readers (vs 7)?

What else does he say about the commandment in the beginning of verse 8?

How can a command be new and old at the same time?

****The command had been clearly spelled out in different ways in the Scripture from pretty much the beginning of time. Just as Jesus called it a new commandment, John referred to it as new also. This was not new in concept, but a call to a renewed commitment to it.*

How was the command “true in Him and in you” (vs 8b - ESV)?

****The “Him” is referring to Jesus who lived out a love for others in His everyday life and passed the power to do so to His followers.*

What do you think the end of verse 8 means?

****It appears that John is describing how Jesus brought great light into the world through love. The more that love is shown to others, the stronger the light is in this dark world.*

How do verses 9-11 reveal that more than words are needed to reveal a person is a believer?

****As a believer, you will have times where you love others in a greater way, but the more you grow in Christ, the more you will love others. One of the great ways to know if you are spiritually growing is to evaluate your level of love towards others.*

James 2:8-13

What does James say is the royal law (vs 8)?

What is one of the ways that we fail to truly love others (vs 9)?

****There are some people who are very easy to love, but there are others who are much more difficult to love. In this context, James was challenging the believers not to show preferential treatment to the rich and powerful, but to care for all men.*

What do verses 9-11 reveal about sin?

How are you to live (vs 12)?

What does verse 13 reveal about judgment and mercy?

Personal Application

What can I learn about God from this passage?

How can I apply what I have learned to my everyday life?

Wednesday

Study: Romans 13:11-12, Colossians 3:5-17

Reading: Ephesians 4:17-32

Memory: Matthew 5:26

Romans 13:11-12

****The ESV begins with “besides this” which is from two Greek words that were used as conjunctions. Basically, Paul was reminding his readers in the previous verses about the importance of love and emphasizing the fact in verses 11-14 that it is important to show love now and not to wait.*

Why do you think Paul makes reference to “time” (vs 11)?

****The Greek word for time means “occasion, period of time, season or opportunity.”*

What did Paul want his readers to do (vs 11)?

What do you think Paul was referring to when he used the word “sleep” (vs 11)?

****Paul is referring to spiritual apathy in this verse. It has the idea of a person rolling over in bed, not wanting to get up when they should be awake and attentive to what is going on around them.*

What do you think the end of verse 11 and beginning of verse 12 means?

****The simple truth is that each day you live, you find yourself one day closer to the end of your life. Paul wanted the believers to realize that everyday was important.*

In order to make the most of our time here on earth, what did Paul encourage us to do with darkness (vs 12b)?

****Evil is often referred to as darkness, and here Paul used the play on words by referring to the darkness of night as evil and the light of day as*

good.

What is the “armor of light” (vs 12b)?

****The Greek word for armor meant “weapons or tools.” Instead of living in the evil of our life without Christ, we need to put to use the spiritual weapons given by God to live differently than the world around us.*

Colossians 3:5-17

What are we to seek to remove from our lives (vs 5)?

****Understand that this can only be done through the power of the Holy Spirit.*

What is good to remember about the acts mentioned in verse 5 (vs 6)?

Why are some of these things hard to remove from your life (vs 7)?

What else are you supposed to put off (vs 8-9)?

What are you to put on as a believer (vs 10)? How do you do this?

****Notice that we are to be “renewed in knowledge” (ESV). This is very similar to what Paul said in Romans 12:1-2 where he described how you are to be transformed by the “renewing of your mind.”*

What is the main thing you are to put on (vs 14)?

How is love the core of the other things mentioned in verses 12-13?

What are two things we are to “let” (ESV) into our lives (vs 15-16)?

Personal Application

What can I learn about God from this passage?

How can I apply what I have learned to my everyday life?

Thursday

Study: Romans 13:13-14, James 4:1-12

Reading: Ephesians 5:1-21

Memory: Matthew 5:26

Romans 3:13-14

How are you to “walk” (vs 13)?

****The idea of “walk” is the way you live. Here, you are told to live “properly.” The proper thing for you to do as a child of God is to live in the light of righteousness. Your life should be a reflection of the light of God to this dark world.*

How do you see an emphasis on parties and drinking in today’s society (vs 13)?

****Though the Bible does not forbid the drinking of alcohol, much of the consuming of alcoholic beverages done in our society today is for the purpose of getting drunk.*

How is sensuality a main part of our society today (vs 13)?

Why do you think that “quarreling and jealousy” (ESV) are included in the list of sins of the flesh (vs 13)?

****Most “good Christians” would know that partying and sexual sins are wrong in the eyes of God, but there are many sins that can be committed in the mind that we think are less serious.*

What are we supposed to “put on” (vs 14)?

What do you think this means and how do you do it?

What are you not to “make provision” for (vs 14)?

What are ways that you can put yourself in positions where you can give

into your fleshly desires?

James 4:1-12

What causes fights and arguments (vs 1-2)?

Why doesn't God give you what you ask for (vs 3)?

What does James declare about being a friend of the world (vs 4)?

What do you think it means to be a friend of the world?

What does it mean that God is jealous for you as His child (vs 5)?

What does God give you the grace to do (vs 6)?

****God gives you the power and ability you need to overcome any temptation.*

Who does God resist (vs 6)?

What are two steps that you need to take to gain victory over the flesh (vs 7)?

What else can you do to help you live in the light (vs 8)?

What do you think verses 9 and 10 are referring?

****You do not have the power to fight the enemy or put on the new man in your own power. It is only when you humble yourself and seek God's help that you will be given the ability to be victorious over the flesh.*

What are you not to do towards others (vs 11-12)?

Personal Application

What can you learn about God from this passage?

How can you apply what you have learned to your everyday life?

Friday

Study: Romans 13:8-10

Reading: Matthew 22:34-40, Luke 10:25-37

Memory: Matthew 5:26

Sitting in an unused trash can in my basement is the head of a 10 point buck I shot many years ago. As I sat out in my stand that day, I saw just a flicker of white through some brush about 100 yards away. I knew it was a deer, but couldn't see it through my scope. I kept watching that area carefully till I saw movement again. This time, I looked that direction through my binoculars and saw the back of a deer. All I could see was the mid-section until it finally lifted its head and I saw a nice set of horns. I then lifted up my gun, found it in my scope and pulled the trigger. The deer took three steps and dropped. That was one of the most exciting days I ever had while hunting.

Today, we are going to see how important it is for us to examine our lives. If I had tried to shoot the deer without my binoculars or scope, I couldn't have done it. They helped me see clearly what I was shooting at. The Word of God is like a scope into our lives. It helps us clearly see God's desires and what needs to be changed in our lives.

What Does the Bible Say?

In the first seven verses of chapter 13 Paul had admonished the Romans to obey and honor their government. He told them that they were to pay their taxes because the government was ordained by God. When they would fail to pay their taxes, they would be debtors to the government. This thought led Paul to declare, "Owe no one anything." This declaration didn't just apply to taxes, but was a general principle given throughout scripture. Paul wasn't prohibiting the borrowing of money (this practice is talked about elsewhere in Scripture), but he was telling the believers that they needed to pay off their debts. If a believer owes money to someone or some institution, they are to continually make payments until their debt is paid off.

Paul used the idea of owing money to people to springboard into the thought of what we should be doing on a regular basis. The thing we should be focused on in life is not paying off our earthly debts (which we should do), but to fulfill the heavenly calling God has given us. Though our

outward acts will take on a variety of forms, the key purpose of man is to love God. The more we love God and draw closer to Him, the more we will love others and desire to show that love (vs 8).

Paul repeated the words of Jesus which described how the most important commandment was for believers to “love your neighbor as yourself.” When you love your neighbor, you won’t steal from them, you won’t commit adultery, you won’t covet, and you won’t do many of the other selfish things that hurt others. This is because love helps and encourages others, rather than hurting them (vs 9-10).

How Does this Apply to Me?

Are you known as a person who is full of love? Do your neighbors, co-workers and schoolmates respect you because of the deep love that you show to them? Do you treat others the way you would want them to treat you? Many people feel they are good Christians because they don’t do much of the sins that are mentioned in the Bible, but they fail to realize that God desires us to love one another. This unselfish love doesn’t come naturally to many of us because we are sinful creatures. It only comes as you choose to allow God to work through you as you ask Him to give you a love for others. As you grow in your relationship with God, you will love Him more, and you will begin to love others as well. As you read His Word, you will understand how much He loved you and how very little you deserve. This understanding will help you to love others in a deeper way. The core problem that many people face (especially in the United States) is that they are consumed with earthly things. Some Christians are so busy working to pay off their debts to others that they fail to take time to focus on loving God and loving others. Examine your life today and ask God to help you focus on real love.

Suggestions for Prayer

- * *Thank God for giving you the ability to love others.*
- * *Ask God to help you have a focus upon Him.*
- * *Praise God because He is love.*

Thought for the day

Saturday

Study: Romans 13:11-14

Reading: Colossians 3:1-17

Memory: Matthew 5:26

As a pastor, I get the great privilege of watching people fall asleep in church services. It is quite humorous to see them start nodding and then to see others look at them when they start snoring. As a person falls asleep, it doesn’t just happen all of a sudden. Their eyes will slowly begin to close, then their eyes will open all of a sudden as the person realizes they are falling asleep. They try to fight it, but normally it happens again. By the second or third time, they normally stay closed. That is when the head bobbing begins, and then, if they sleep long enough, the snoring usually follows.

Today, we are going to see how Christians can be lulled into sleep by the world. We will see how important it is for us to wake up and shine as children of God.

What Does the Bible Say?

In verses 8-10, Paul explained how important it was for believers to love others. This wasn’t just a suggestion, but was an urgent command. Verses 11-14 express the urgency and the importance of putting off ourselves and displaying the love of Christ. This urgency is clearly seen as Paul described how it was time for believers to wake up. Believers shouldn’t waste their time here on earth living passively, but need to be actively living for Christ. Believers are in a continual battle between the Spirit and the flesh. The flesh is naturally lazy and desires to please itself, and that is why we need to choose to yield to the Spirit and to display the love of Christ. When Paul declared that “salvation is nearer to us now than when we first believed” he was describing how the return of Christ is closer today than it was when they first became believers (vs 11).

The “day” mentioned in verse 12 is a reference to the return of Jesus which the New Testament church eagerly anticipated. The “night” was a reference to the evil works of darkness that reigned upon the earth. The next event on God’s calender of prophecy is the return of Christ and that return

could come at any time. This presents us and presented Paul's readers with an urgency to do what we can for the Lord right now. God desires us to remove the works of the world from our life and to put on the love of the Lord (vs 12).

When Christians consistently display the love of Christ, they are lighting up the world around them. To do this, we need to put off the evil sins that are enticing to our flesh. The sins described here are partying, drunkenness, sexual immorality, sensuality, arguing and jealousy. People in those days were the same as people today. Just watch television for a night and these same desires can easily be seen in our society today (vs 13).

As believers, we need to choose to remove those evil actions from our lives and to replace them with the love of God. We are to clothe ourselves with Jesus Christ so that His love can be displayed to all from our lives. Just as a person puts their clothes on daily, we need to daily ask God to help us display Him through our lives (vs 14).

How Does this Apply to Me?

Does your life brightly display Christ to others, or have you let your spiritual life slip into mediocrity? This slip doesn't happen all of a sudden, but gradually as the pleasures of the world and selfish desires draw you away from Christ. This is why it is vital for you to consciously take time to clothe yourself with Jesus Christ each day. You have to choose to discipline yourself to go to the closet of His Word and to let Him show you what He wants you to wear each day. God will reveal to you what He wants you to do and will give you all the power you need to accomplish His plan for your life, but you must allow Him to do so.

Suggestions for Prayer

- * *Thank God for the light He gives you in your life.*
- * *Ask God to help you clothe yourself with Jesus Christ.*
- * *Praise God because He is in control of time.*

Thought for the day

Sunday

Reading: Romans 13:8-14

(Take time to read this passage again, letting the truths you have studied this week sink into your mind. You are encouraged to go online and read it through a few times in different versions.)

www.biblegateway.com

Bible Memory

Matthew 5:10 "Blessed are those who are persecuted for righteousness' sake, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven. 11 "Blessed are you when others revile you and persecute you and utter all kinds of evil against you falsely on my account. 12 Rejoice and be glad, for your reward is great in heaven, for so they persecuted the prophets who were before you. 13 "You are the salt of the earth, but if salt has lost its taste, how shall its saltiness be restored? It is no longer good for anything except to be thrown out and trampled under people's feet. 14 "You are the light of the world. A city set on a hill cannot be hidden. 15 Nor do people light a lamp and put it under a basket, but on a stand, and it gives light to all in the house. 16 In the same way, let your light shine before others, so that they may see your good works and give glory to your Father who is in heaven. 17 "Do not think that I have come to abolish the Law or the Prophets; I have not come to abolish them but to fulfill them. 18 For truly, I say to you, until heaven and earth pass away, not an iota, not a dot, will pass from the Law until all is accomplished. 19 Therefore whoever relaxes one of the least of these commandments and teaches others to do the same will be called least in the kingdom of heaven, but whoever does them and teaches them will be called great in the kingdom of heaven. 20 For I tell you, unless your righteousness exceeds that of the scribes and Pharisees, you will never enter the kingdom of heaven. 21 "You have heard that it was said to those of old, 'You shall not murder; and whoever murders will be liable to judgment.' 22 But I say to you that everyone who is angry with his brother will be liable to judgment; whoever insults his brother will be liable to the council; and whoever says, 'You fool!' will be liable to the hell of fire. 23 So if you are offering your gift at the altar and there remember that your brother has something against you, 24 leave your gift there before the altar and go. First be reconciled to your brother, and then come and offer your gift. 25 Come to terms quickly with your accuser while you are going with him to court, lest your accuser hand you over to the judge, and the judge to the guard, and you be put in prison. 26 Truly, I say to you, you will never get out until you have paid the last penny.